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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the provision of vocational education in the Province of Alberta, especially the education provided by Alberta Vocational Centres (AVCs). The paper is organized in two sections. The first, introductory section describes the Province of Alberta and its educational system. The second section focuses on Alberta Vocational Centres which provide education and job training for adults with less than a high school education. It discusses the role of AVCs, and provides a long list of sources of student financial aid. This section then reports a case study of the Lac la Biche AVC which serves largely a Native Canadian population, including its background, campus, organization, and course portfolio. Finally, the paper discusses the role and future direction of AVCs. Appendixes to the report describe a course for community resource workers and provide a form for institutional self-evaluation. (KC)

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN ALBERTA

INTRODUCTION

The Province of Alberta

Alberta is one of the 10 Provinces which, together with the Yukon and north west Territories, comprise Canada. It is the fourth largest with a population of 2,340,000 and extends for 255,000 square miles, half of which is forest with a further 7,000 miles of lakes and rivers. It lies between British Columbia to the west and Saskatchewan to the east; to the north lie the Territories, and to the south, Montana in the USA. Its geography, which dictates patterns of population, varies from the Rockies to the south west, to the plains and prairies of the south and east, and the wilderness of forest and muskeg in the north.

Alberta's demography shares some of the characteristics of Canada as a whole. Most people live within 100 miles of the 49th parallel, in rural communities, and derive from varying ethnic groups (49% from the British Isles, 12% from Germany, 9% from the Ukraine, 8% from Scandinavia, 3% are Dutch, 3% Polish, 2% indigenous native, and there are growing numbers of Asians and Chinese). Two major cities, Edmonton and Calgary, contain 1,250,000 people; the remaining significant urban areas are restricted to Red Deer, Lethbridge, and, furthest north, Fort McMurray.

Second only in size to Saskatchewan, Alberta's farmland contributes $3.5b to the Province's GNP of $46b through its production of wheat, barley, flax and rape. As in most advanced countries agriculture, including stock rearing, is declining in its significance both in terms of man-power and income, employing only 8% of the working population. Alberta's principal sources of revenue today are minerals ($17b). It produces 87% of all Canada's petroleum products and holds 97% of all its reserves, either in oil wells or in the tar sands which cover the north of the Province, underlying the westward shift of economic power in Canada from the eastern Provinces where 60% of Canada's 26 million people live.

The employment pattern in Alberta also reflects that of the federation as a whole. Twenty-nine per cent of the working population are employed in services, 18% in trade, 10% in construction, 8% in manufacturing, 8% in agriculture, and 7% in public administration. The unemployment rate has increased from 4.7% in 1976 to 7.5% during 1982-1983, and the current figure for Canada is 12.5%. Nevertheless, Alberta has a *per capita* income of $13,000 and Calgary is estimated to be the second richest city in Canada. The birth rate is dropping by about 1,000 *per annum* (41,000 recorded births in 1982), despite a low average age (in Fort McMurray it is estimated to be 25).

The British North American Act requires the Province to be governed by a Lieutenant Governor, but the principal enacting power is the Executive Council headed by a Prime Minister, together with a Cabinet which exercises its power through Standing Policy Committees. The Legislative Assembly is dominated by the Progressive Conservative Party with 75 seats. The remaining 7 seats are held by the Social Credit Party (3), the New Democratic Party (2) and independent conservative,

whilst the Federal Government is predominantly Liberal, who hold 157 seats to the Conservatives' 103.

Education in Alberta

Education, a Provincial responsibility in Canada, is administered by a Minister of Education, of Cabinet rank, assisted by Deputy Ministers and Assistant Deputy Ministers responsible for various Departments. Tertiary education is the responsibility of the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Manpower (its organisation is outlined in Figure 1).

Alberta has 1,433 elementary schools, 173 secondary schools, and 23 higher education institutions.

(a) Schools. The Province is divided into School Districts, each headed by a Superintendant to administer the public, non-sectarian school system. Schools are operated by Boards of Education whose members are elected by residents of the local municipality. All children aged between 6 and 16 must attend school, either in Roman Catholic or non-denominational, public systems. (Where separate schools exist, parents pay taxes to one or another system according to their religious affiliation.) Private schools must be approved by the Province and follow a curriculum approved by the Minister of Education. There are four levels of schooling:-

i. Early Childhood Services. An optional programme for children aged 4½ to 5½ offers half-day programmes operated by School Boards or incorporated non-profit societies.

ii. Elementary Schools. Children start at 5½ to 6 years-old and attend for 6 years in Grades 1 through 6.

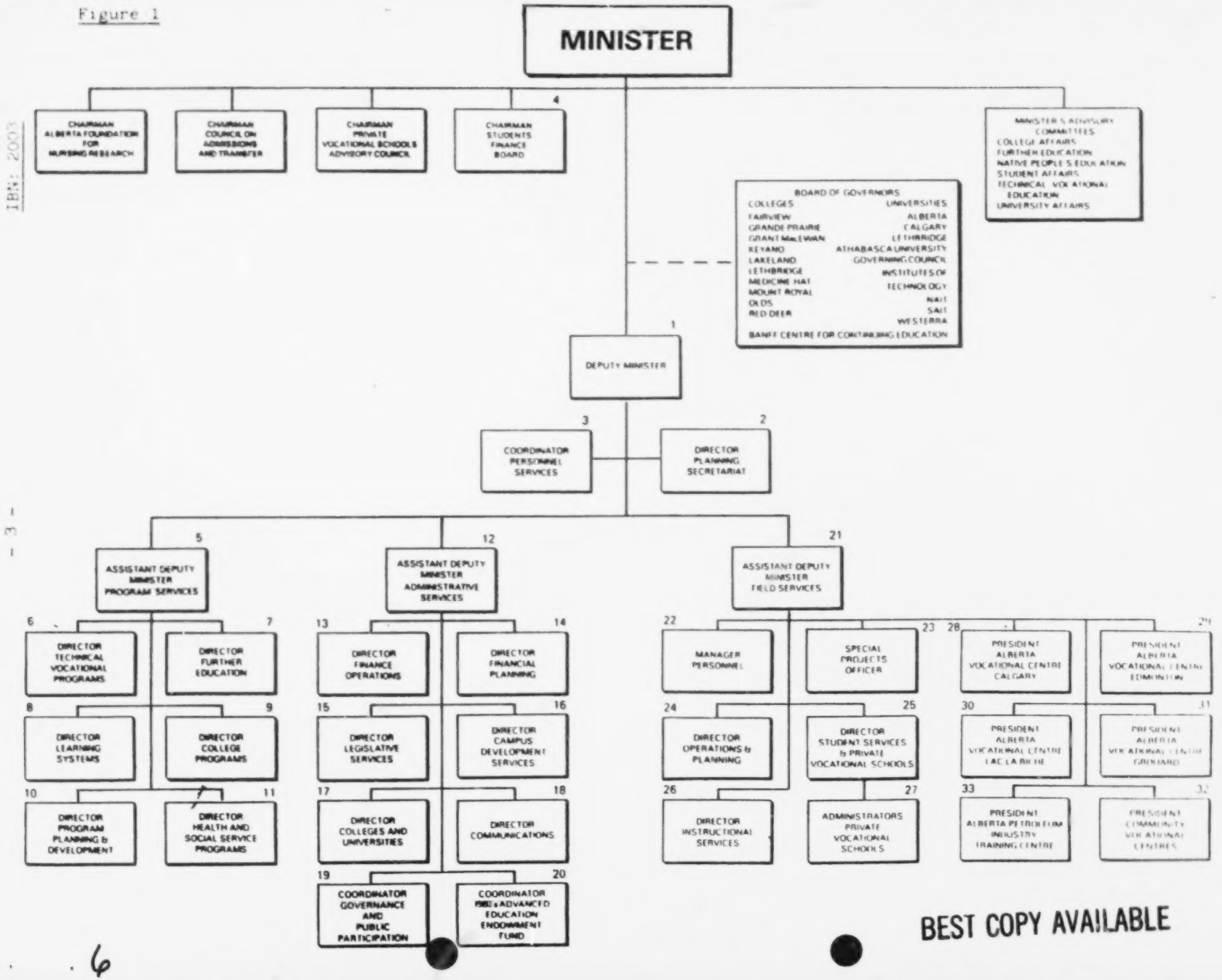
iii. Secondary Junior High School. These provide Grades 7 through 9 for children aged 11 to 16.

iv. Senior (or Composite) High School. These provide Grades 10 through 12, for those aged 15 to 18 and which lead to the High School Diploma (awarded for 100 credits for specific courses in English and other subjects) which may lead to further or higher education.

Alberta runs a Correspondence School for children in isolated communities. School Boards offer general interest and Diploma courses for those aged 18 and over. Local Further Education Councils also sponsor non-credit courses in communities and are composed of representatives of various educational, business, industrial, and social interests.

ORGANIZATION OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

Figure 1



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(b) Advanced Education. There are four universities, at Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, and Athabasca. (The University of Athabasca delivers part-time home study courses leading to a baccalaureate degree both within Alberta and Canada as a whole.)

(c) College and Technical Vocational Education. There are 10 "public colleges" controlled by Boards of Governors: Grande Prairie Regional College; Grant McEwan Community College, Edmonton; Lethbridge Community College; Medicine Hat College; Red Deer College; Mount Royal College, Calgary; Fairview College; Lakeland College; Olds College; and Keyano College, Fort McMurray.

There are six independent, private colleges affiliated with the University of Alberta (denominational), and 14 non-affiliated colleges.

There are three provincial institutes of technology: the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) at Edmonton, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) at Calgary, and a relatively new one in Stony Plain, the Westerra Institute of Technology.

Vocational training is carried out at Alberta Vocational Centres (AVC) in Calgary, Edmonton, Grouard, and Lac La Biche, and Community Vocational Centres and Community Consortia in isolated communities. (There are also some 100 private, registered, trade schools.)

THE PROVISION FOR VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN ALBERTA

The Province of Alberta provides for vocational training in four principal ways:

(a) Vocational Centres and specialised centres;

(b) Community consortia;

(c) The apprenticeship programme;

(d) Private vocational schools.

Vocational Centres

ALBERTA VOCATIONAL CENTRES

Alberta Vocational Centres are located in four communities: Calgary, Edmonton, Grouard, and Lac La Biche. These are provincially administered institutions (as opposed to the "public college", or community colleges), managed by the Field Services Division of the Alberta Department of Advanced Education and Manpower.

The purpose of these Vocational Centres is to ensure that a comprehensive range of needed adult education programmes and services are developed and maintained and offer short, intensive, and specialised courses to adults who largely have less than a high school diploma. Preparation for employment is the principal task and as such Centres offer core programmes including academic upgrading; clerical, stenographic, and management training; nursing assistant training; training approved by for first year pre-apprenticeship accreditation in carpentry, bricklaying, motor mechanics, and welding; native arts and crafts; community health worker and community resource worker; English as a second language; and a wide variety of general interest courses offered through the institutions' Continuing Education Divisions. No course is longer than a year, and most are short,six-week skills training courses, often created at the request of industry.

Admission varies with the programme, but it is generally based on the ability to benefit and "adult status" and privilege (i.e. those who are 17 and over or who have been out of the school system for at least a year). Vocational counselling and testing is also available at these Centres.

These institutions meet a specific need in vocational training and education and cater for the "bottom end" of adult abilities and for those who are seeking a "second chance". Whilst oriented towards the region in which they are situated and their idiosyncratic needs, they also aim to enhance the capabilities of Albertans to participate in the social and economic development of the Province. Many students are of the indigenous native population and share disadvantages with immigrants of other ethnic origins. They therefore plug a gap in provision which still exists in the UK.

AVC's are complemented by Community Vocational Centres designed to bring basic skills courses to isolated regions. They currently operate in 18 communities in the Lesser Slave Lake, Peace River, and Athabasca regions. At various times CVC's offer courses in academic upgrading, basic business training, applied basic technical skills, community leadership and service, personal development and vocational orientation experiences which are related to life, education, and job needs. Academic study courses are offered on a continuing basis in all centres. Also, a variety of courses can be assembled and taken, as required, to the communities served. These courses are provided complete with materials, supplies, and instructors. Upgrading secretarial training, trades training, house waiting, first aid, driver training and personal life skills are examples of courses that are offered in this way. Courses employing local instructors in traditional crafts such as trapping and hide tanning are provided in some communities. New educational trends are also acknowledged by such programmes as non-traditional trades for women, life management approaches, computer literacy and applied computer operation. English as a second language courses are provided as they are needed as well as General Education Development diploma preparation courses and career counselling.

Five Community Consortia have also been established by the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower to provide small communities with post-secondary opportunities. A consortium is an association of two or more post-secondary institutions which provides a range of courses in communities not already served by an existing institution. The consortium co-ordinates the activities of its member institutions (i.e. universities, colleges, technical institutes and vocational centres) in offering credit programmes. They are offered through on-site instruction (the "flying teacher" is a northern Alberta phenomenon), home study, or by teleconference. Consortia have been established to serve Drumheller, Pincher Creek/Crows Nest Pass, Drayton Valley, the North Peace River and Yellowhead areas.

Specialised centres include the Alberta Petroleum Industry Training Centre at Edmonton established in 1966 specially to train in pre-employment oil drilling courses, upgrading, and special upgrading and retraining for senior oil personnel. It has achieved a world-wide recognition.

The apprenticeship programme, a planned trade training by Alberta Apprenticeship and Trade Certification, is available in 41 of the 48 Designated trades. Depending on the trade, apprenticeship varies from two to four years during which time apprentices are indentured to an employer and receive 45% to 90% of the prevailing journeyman's wage. Apprentices learn through observation, practice, and study under the supervision of a qualified instructor and must attend courses at a college or technical institute varying in length between 3 and 12 weeks each year. Entrants must be 16 years of age, meet the educational qualifications required for the trade, and be suitably employed.

In agriculture, the Alberta Green Certificate Training Programme operates (offered through Alberta Manpower and Alberta Agriculture) lasting one to three years for youths aged 18. Training is carried out through an approved farmer-trainer to one or more of three levels: Level I, certifying a competent general farm technician; Level II, a capable supervisor; and Level III, as a capable farm manager. On-the-job training may be supplemented by workshops, seminars, correspondence courses, short or longer agricultural courses. No time limit is set for the programme.

Private Vocational Schools offer educational programmes and services to students outside the public system. There are over 100 schools licensed under the Private Vocational Schools Act under which all schools and their agents are required to be registered and licensed. Most specialise in single subject areas such as secretarial, hairdressing and beauty culture, modelling, TV acting and commercial performing. The Field Services Division of the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower are responsible for their licensing within the regulations laid down by the Act and for monitoring their operations.

Funding Students in AVC's

There are no "mandatory grants" in Alberta. However, there are several federal and provincial financial assistance programmes to off-set the cost of further and advanced education. Costs are heavy: public college courses cost about $300 a year, about $450 for a technical institute, and the University of Alberta estimates a one-year undergraduate programme will cost

at least $5,600. Although repayable student loans,administered by the Students Finance Board, are the main method of financing, some students obtain non-repayable assistance from bursaries, fellowships, grants, prizes, and scholarships. Bursaries are awards given to students who have reached a certain level and need assistance to continue. Fellowships and scholarships are awarded to full-time students on the basis of academic excellence. Prizes rarely have value beyond $200.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS

Student Loans

Full-time undergraduate students who are residents of Alberta and enrolled in a post-secondary institution (university, public or private college, technical institute, school of nursing, registered private vocational school and the Banff Centre for Continuing Education) in Alberta may qualify under the Canada Student Loans Act and the Alberta Students Finance Act for guaranteed loans up to a maximum of $4,300 each academic year (32 weeks). Students in graduate or professional programmes may qualify under these Acts for loans up to a maximum of $6,800 each academic year. As a general rule, Alberta's undergraduate students studying out-of-province are not eligible for provincial support.

The actual amount of the loan is calculated on the basis of need. Students are expected to contribute to the cost of their own education and, depending on circumstances, parents or spouse may also be expected to contribute.

After graduation, students may apply to the Students Finance Board for "remission", or repayment of part of the loan. Under the current policy, the Students Finance Board, if satisfied that a reasonable contribution to education has been made, may repay up to 50% of the first year's loan, 40% of the second, and 25% of any subsequent year's loan.

Alberta Educational Opportunity Equalization Grants

Grants to a maximum of $2,000 may be provided to a dependent student attending a post-secondary institution whose programme of study is not available within normal commuting distance of the parents' home. The grant is designed to help offset the additional costs incurred by students in this situation.

Supplemental Assistance Grants

Undergraduate students at a post-secondary institution who can demonstrate a need for assistance exceeding the $4,300 loan maximum for each academic year, may be eligible for a Supplemental Assistance Grant to a maximum of $2,500 each academic year. Additional grants may be available for students enrolled in a programme of study which is longer than the normal academic year.

Maintenance Grants

These grants, to a maximum of $6,000, are available to disadvantaged students who do not expect to complete their education without assistance beyond that provided under other programmes. Students considered for these grants include special-needs groups such as single parents and the disabled.

Bursaries for Part-Time Students

Part-time students who are enrolled in courses, including adult further education courses approved by the Students Finance Board, may be eligible for bursaries of $300 maximum each semester. These bursaries are awarded on the basis of financial need, as determined by the Board, and are intended to cover the costs of tuition, books, babysitting and travel, if required.

Scholarships, Fellowships, Prizes, Bursaries and Grants

Student financial assistance made available by donors such as clubs, organisations, societies, foundations, associations, unions, companies or individuals is administered by the post-secondary institution to which the donation was made. Some internal institutional funding is administered in the same way. Student financial assistance which is provided by the Province of Alberta is administered by the Students Finance Board.

Although awards and scholarships are made on the basis of academic achievement and financial need, some give preference to members of a specific club, organisation, society, foundation, association, union or company. For example, the Royal Canadian Legion offers bursaries and scholarships to ex-service persons, children of veterans or children of ex-service persons.

The scholarships, fellowships, prizes, bursaries and grants which are administered by the Students Finance Board are listed below.

Province of Alberta Scholarships

These $150 scholarships are awarded each year to university undergraduate students on the basis of academic achievement. An 80% average is required in order to qualify for these scholarships and individual applications must be submitted.

Province of Alberta Prizes

Prizes of $150 may be awarded to students registered in diploma or certificate programmes of not less than 16 weeks duration at approved post-secondary institutions. These prizes are awarded on the basis of academic excellence and a student must be recommended by the staff of the institution.

Province of Alberta Graduate Scholarships and Fellowships

Students, who are Canadian citizens or permanent residents, may be eligible for a Graduate Scholarship or Fellowship if they are enrolled in a full-time graduate degree programme at an Alberta university. The maximum scholarship is $6,800 for a full calendar-year of study and the maximum fellowship is $7,800 for a full calendar-year of study. These scholarships and fellowships are awarded on the basis of academic attainment, on the recommendation of the university.

Banff Centre Bursaries

Bursaries to the maximum of tuition fees may be awarded to students enrolled in visual and performing arts programmes at the Banff Centre for Continuing Education. The amount of each bursary is determined by the student's financial need. Individual applications must be submitted through the Banff Centre for Continuing Education.

Ukrainian Language Development Grant

A maximum grant of $2,000 each year is available to students who are pursuing studies designed to enhance the teaching of the Ukrainian language in Alberta. To be eligible for this grant a student must be recommended by the Minister of Education or his/her delegate.

Federal-Provincial Bilingual Education Programme

There are eight different awards available to students and/or French language teachers under this programme. They include travel bursaries, summer course bursaries, teacher bursaries and teacher assistant bursaries.

Queen Elizabeth Scholarships in Canadian Studies

These scholarships, valued at $1,000 each, are available to students enrolled in the final year of an undergraduate programme at an Alberta university. To be eligible students must be a permanent resident of Canada who is enrolled in a programme which focuses primarily or uniquely on aspects of Canadian culture or problems of significance to Canada.

Northern Alberta Development Council Bursaries

Students who have been long-term (three year minimum) residents of Alberta, particularly those from the north, may apply for this bursary. The maximum award for a single student is $3,500 each academic year; the maximum award for a married student or student withd ependents is $5,600 each academic year.

Recipients of the bursary are selected by a committee and must sign an agreement to work in the northern areas of the province for one year for year of full bursary support. In certain areas of the north, two years of service are required for each year of bursary assistance.

Alberta Women's Bureau "Person's Case" Scholarship

These scholarships are awarded annually, on the basis of academic standing and the applicant's financial situation, to undergraduate students at universities or public colleges who have placed an emphasis on the study of human relationships. The value of each scholarship may be up to $2,000 depending on the demonstrated financial need of the applicant.

Grants for Disabled Persons

The Students Finance Board may issue grants to a maximum of $1,000 each year to high school and post-secondary students who require special assistance due to a physical or mental disability.

Teachers of the Disabled Grants

These grants are to support employed, certified Alberta teachers seeking to upgrade their qualifications in the education of students with hearing impairments, visual impairments or multiple disabilities. Up to $10,000 a year may be made available to full-time students.

Vocational Teacher Development Grants

These grants are available to students who possess a certificate of qualification under the Manpower Development Act and its Regulations, or have vocational training that is acceptable to the Students Finance Board; and are enrolled in a course of studies approved by the Board which leads to Vocational Teacher Certification. Students must be willing to work for or provide service to a school board or educational institution which is under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Education. Students may receive a grant of $2,000 for each full course equivalent to a maximum grant of $20,000. The actual amount of the bursary is determined on the basis of financial need.

Band and Choral Teacher Development Grants

These grants are available to Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are enrolled in programmes of study that lead to certification as band and/or choral teachers. Applicants must have experience in the field of music after high school graduation which would qualify them for at least one year of advanced standing in music by the university. Students must demonstrate that, following the completion of their post-secondary studies, they intend to be employed by a school board or other educational institution approved by the Minister of Education.

Film Industry Training Bursaries

Bursaries for short-term study, longer formal training, as well as on-the-job training are available to practitioners wishing to upgrade their skills in areas related tothe film industry in Alberta.

Alexander Rutherford Scholarships for High School Achievement are awarded to those high school students who plan to enrol in a post-secondary programme of at least one semester in length. An award is made for each high school grade in which the student has achieved a minimum average of 80%: $300 for grade 10, $500 for grade 11 and $700 for grade 12.

Alberta Heritage Scholarship Fund

Funded by a $100 million endowment from the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, these scholarships are designed to recognise the reward Albertans who have demonstrated exceptional achievement in their work, recreational leadership and athletic or academic pursuits. The Fund is comprised of a number of individual scholarships and awards named in memory of outstanding Albertans.

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR ADULTS

Adult High School Grants

Adult students who are registered at an approved high school or in a high school programme approved by the Students Finance Board may be eligible to receive a loan and/or grant. In order to qualify as an adult high school student, students must be 18 years of age or older and not have been in attendance at shcool in the preceding year, or married; or must have dependents. An adult student attending courses sponsored under the Alberta Vocational Training Programme or by Canada Employment and Immigration, is not eligible to receive assistance.

Canada Employment and Immigration Training Programmes

The Canada Employment and Immigration Commission provides funding to adult Albertans without marketable skills who wish to take academic upgrading or skill-training programmes that are not more than one year in length.

To qualify for skill-training programmes, applicants must be beyond the school leaving age of 16 years in the province of Alberta and have been out of the public school system for 12 months or more. To qualify for upgrading courses towards employment, skill-training programmes or apprenticeship programmes, applicants must be 18 yeas of age and out of the public school system for two years.

Alberta Vocational Training Programme (AVT)

Administered by the Department of Manpower, the Alberta Vocational Training Programme is designed for adults who have minimal job skills or who have not completed sufficient high school study to enter a trade or vocational programme. This programme helps those needing academic upgrading to qualify for apprenticeship training, vocational training or other schooling. It also assists people geographically removed from ordinary opportunities for training and employment.

To be eligible for assistance, individuals must be unemployed or under-employed, residents of Alberta, and out of public school for at least one year. Also they must be able to show that they cannot finance their education or training with their own resources and that they are capable of benefitting from education or training.

Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Programme (VRDP)

This programme, funded jointly by Alberta Manpower and the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission, provides assistance to adult Albertans who have mental, physical or emotional handicaps and who require training or retraining which will help them to become economically self-sufficient. Assistance may include the cost of books and tuition, supplies, education/ employment related equipment, and a training allowance. Allowances are grants and do not have to be repaid.

Alberta Advanced Education, Alberta Manpower, and Alberta Social Services and Community Health cooperatively provide sponsorship for upgrading,skill training or post-secondary studies of various lengths.

Social Allowance Programme

For those who are eligible for social assistance and cannot obtain employment, especially single parents, Alberta Social Services and Community Health can make special provision for upgrading, training or short-term career-oriented education to help individuals become self-sufficient. Skill-training programmes leading towards certificates or diplomas that are completed in two years or less may be considered, as well as any other length of time required for upgrading.

CASE STUDY

LAC LA BICHE AVC : AN ILLUSTRATION

Background

Lac la Biche is a small lake-side community of some 2,000 people on the edge of the north-eastern wilderness of Alberta, 250 miles north-east of Edmonton. Here, the farmlands gradually merge with the forest, muskeg, and lakes. Communities are scattered, isolated, and largely Indian. The town is the centre of regional administration, for local government and forestry, and has recently opened a regional hospital adjacent to the AVC campus now under construction.

As a region in need of development the Federal Government, in 1968, set up an independent Crown corporation ("NewStart") to research varying means of educating adults of a depressed area who had limited formal training. Due to limited funds, NewStart closed the following year, upon which the native population staged a sit-in protest and established its own organisation, Alberta Pet-Ta-Pun. The protest was so vigorous that in April, 1973, the Province took over the facilities and set up a centre to

commence work as an AVC. Between 1974 and 1981 the Centre constructed its own buildings and developed a campus consisting largely of linked, mobile huts and trailers and continued to develop its courses in Lac la Biche, and in satellite centres (often as far as 200 miles away) in Saddle, Goodfish, Fishing, and Cold Lakes, St. Paul, Fort Kent, Blue Quills, and Elizabeth Settlement. A new, purpose-built campus will be completed by 1985.

The Campus

Despite the inconvenient and in places appalling conditions of a temporary site of huts and trailers, the Centre has over the years developed a functional and spirited campus with a surprising number of facilities. Apart from the usual run of classrooms, workshops, and workrooms, the campus also provides a Daycare Service for children of adult students, a 102 bed residence, a cafeteria and social area. The Learning Resource Centre and Audio-Visual Department contains the Library, Film Viewing Room, Reading Room, and Microcomputer Laboratory. There are some 500 films and 10,000 books in store which are also available to local residents as well as staff and students. The first phase of building was completed in 1984 and consists of 66 family accommodation units, varying from two to four bedroom houses furnished and equipped with major items. Displays of native arts and crafts of the highest quality add not only colour and interest but emphasise the orientation of the AVC.

Organisation

The AVC is headed by a President and a Vice President and organised into six Departments as outlined in Figure 2.

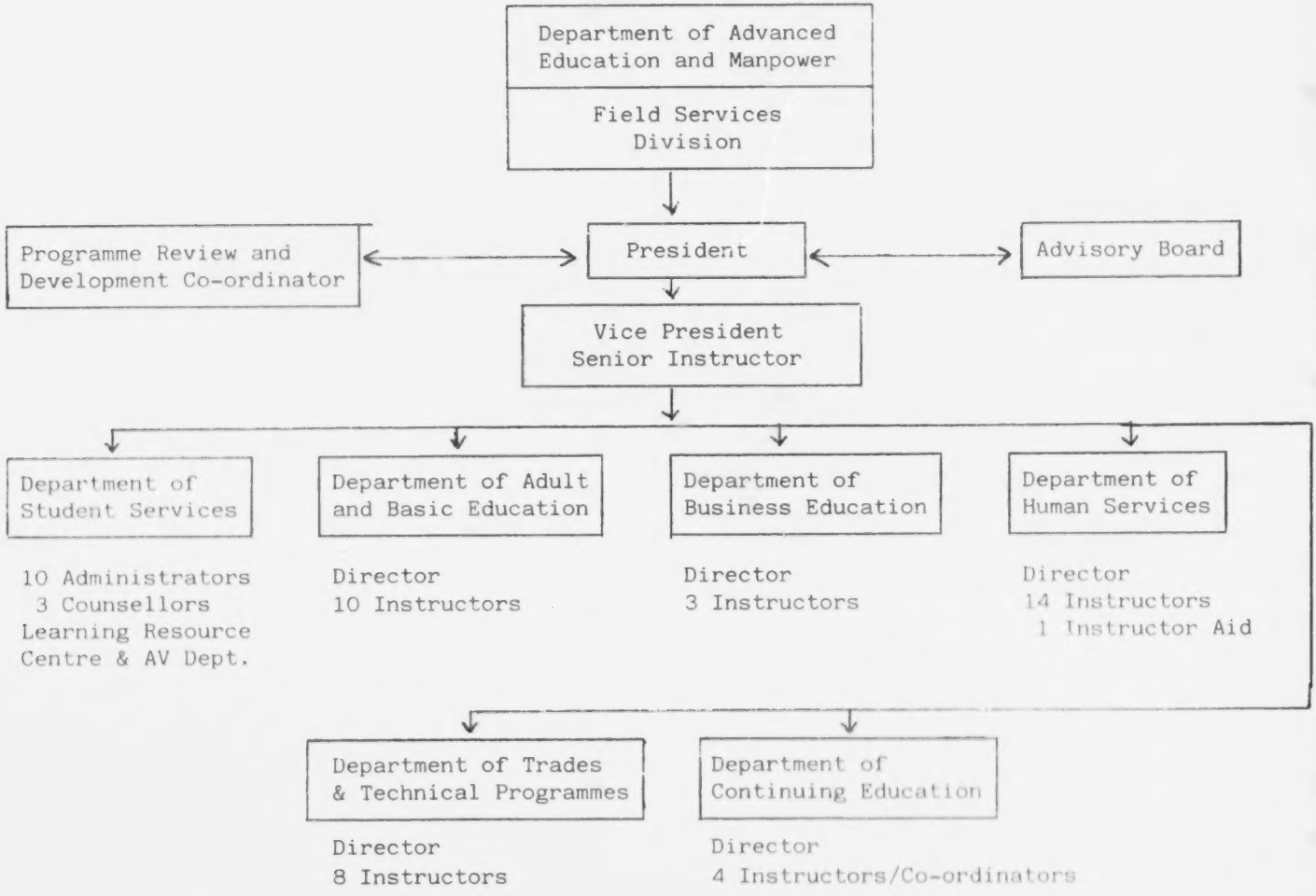
Course Portfolio

The AVC's mandate to serve the educational needs of northern Albertans and of the less privileged, with a special interest in native people, is reflected in the range of courses offered.

(a) Department of Adult Basic and Academic Upgrading. The programmes are designed to provide basic skills which help adults to make choices and prepare for their futures. Adult basic education programmes include maths, reading, language,science, social studies, and lifeskills at three levels. Academic upgrading enables students to attain grades 10, 11 and 12 in a range of matriculation and diploma high school courses together with non-credit recreation and life skills courses. Trades preparation courses are designed to provide the necessary competencies in maths, science, and English prior to entering the pre-apprenticeship programme.

Figure 2

The Organisation of Lac la Biche AVC



(b) Department of Business Education. Courses include accounting for general business, (40 weeks), business administration, clerk/typist, and stenographer programmes. (The business administration course is quivalent to the first year Business Administration programme at NAIT).

(c) Department of Human Services. The Department prepares students for para-professional careers within the field of human services leading to work in social work, counselling, court work, schools, and public health. They include courses for community health worker (24 weeks), community resource worker (36 weeks), early childhood development and teacher aide (36 weeks including a 12 week placement), life skills coach training (5 weeks together with 6 week practicum), rehabilitation services practitioner (36 weeks), and native cultural arts (including Indian history, art, bead work, syllabics, traditional costumes, footwear, woodcarving textiles, pottery and marketing and management of cottage craft industry). (See Appendix I for a course outline in more detail.)

(d) Department of Trades and Technical Programmes. Courses include pre-employment bricklaying, carpentry, cooking, motor mechanics; forestry crew worker; power engineering (fourth class); basic arc and acetylene welding.

(e) Department of Continuing Education. The Department offers driver training for drivers in Class 3 and 5 and professional driving courses. It also works in conjunction with the Further Education Council of the Lac la Biche district founded in 1983 in providing a range of general interest and non-vocational courses. Its most unusual feature is the work in conjunction with The Fur Division of Alberta Fish and Wildlife Department in providing courses in basic and advanced trapping, fur handling and conservation courses, together with the qualification of wilderness medical technician.

Lac la Biche AVC also works on joint, co-operative venture with Keyano College Division of Heavy Industrial Plant road-building programmes, and also undertakes education and training at the St. Paul Correctional Centre. The power engineering course is run with the aid of SAIT and the health childhood/teacher aide programme is transferrable to the second year programme at Grant McEwan and Red Deer Community Colleges. In addition, teleconferencing facilities are available which brings courses from the Faculty of Social Welfare at the University of Calgary and Athabasca University.

College Management

The most impressive aspect of the management of the AVC was the continuous effort made to provide responses to community needs and to improve qualitatively the institution's role within that community. Apart from the Advisory Board which provides limited feedback from interested representatives of the community, the AVC set up in 1978 a self evaluation process

which provided data and attitudes which enabled the institution to produce in 1980 a development programme for the period 1981 to 1986, identifying relative priorities and issues for discussion.

The staff were all asked to complete a questionnaire dealing with, first, perceived goals of the institution, goal achievement, goal changes, community perception, staff development, the value of the self-study, and to add any comments they felt useful. The second part dealt with major tasks and responsibilities, task and responsibility variance, results achieved, major problems, "beefs and bouquets", budgeting, recommendations for improvements, quality of supervision, staff competence and co-operation, and instructional programme matters. Responses were collated, and the Steering Committee responsible verified group responses to ensure the general overview accurately reflected views of the staff. The report was sent to the Field Services Division of the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower who invited staff from other institutions to form a Visiting Committee who then interviewed the staff in the light of their own report. A series of recommendations were drafted, particularly concerning the consensus of opinion related to the topics of management procedures, communication systems, personnel issues, and matters relating to supplies. (Appendix II lists the questions posed).

In addition, in 1981, the AVC commissioned a report reviewing the programmes and services as seen by native communities in the region, which would enable a better mutual understanding between native communities and the AVC.

The Programme Review and Development Co-ordinator is also responsible for evaluating programmes with a Programmes Review and Development Committee and an Evaluation Committee for each evaluation project. These groups use principally a series of questionnaires completed by staff, students, graduates, and employers. A summary report is completed for each programme evaluated which summarises questionnaire response in terms of three response areas - "little or no improvement indicated", "some or major improvement indicated", and "don't know". Additionally summary statements which would indicate major strengths or weaknesses in the programme are included. Each report also contains some compilation of comparison statistics to show similarities in response or divergencies, ending with recommendations and comments. (The Programme Evaluation Format is produced in toto separately in IBN 2004.)

AVC's FUTURE ROLE AND DIRECTION

To ensure that a comprehensive range of needed quality adult educational programmes and services is developed and maintained, the VOCATIONAL CENTRES will continue to provide educational skill training and service initiatives responsive to local, regional and provincial needs.

While maintaining a focus on the training requirements of adults with special needs, the VOCATIONAL CENTRES will endeavour individually and cooperatively to provide programmes and services designed to enhance the capabilities of Albertans to participate in the social and economic development of the province.

It is considered important that the AVCs and CVCs retain their role as "second chance" institutions; as transition agents for people needing assistance to bring about change in their own lives.

There should be the widest possible range of provision to ensure that as many adults as possible can readily continue their education. They need to be able to re-enter the education system at the time and level best suited to their own circumstances, and, after re-entry, be able to proceed through the system according to their own requirements. The provision of this wide range of opportunities would allow more adults to build on their existing skills and knowledge, and would allow institutions to test the demand from adults for education. The re-entry of large numbers of adults to the education system calls for widespread provision of special support services.

It is by assisting with many additional needs of students that the Vocational Centres play their special role. Care is taken to view the student in the context of his family and community setting.

Understanding and meeting additional student needs help to ensure that learning can adequately take place. Counselling and other support services are not peripheral functions provided on an occasional basis. They are, rather, an integral part of the educational process in which learning is facilitated by the provision of both individual and group services.

Such services include: personal and financial counselling, family housing and day care provisions, recreation activities, career planning and job placements.

It is by continuing to follow this approach that the Vocational Centres will, it is anticipated, be most effective in assisting Albertans in the educational process.

Programming

As the Institutions of the Field Services Division face the balance of the decade, they must be prepared to deal with change and emerging issues and trends.

The AVCs and CVCs have experienced success in providing upgrading and pre-employment training to Alberta's less privileged citizens. The success of this tradition, however, has tended to stereotype these institutions as ONLY providing academic upgrading and a few short term vocational programmes. This perception is far too limited.

Institution planning initiatives in the eighties will be more varied and broader in scope. While the need for academic upgrading is seen as continuing to be the institutions' primary programme, there will be the need to consider new programme initiatives that reflect the employment and manpower development opportunities that emerge as we move on to the 1990's. The involvement of graduates, employers, and the public in identifying programme needs is essential.

The emphasis, therefore, will shift from one which focuses on a narrow set of programmes to one which focuses on the need to serve the special needs of people and their changing educational demands.

Several trends will influence the delivery of education programmes.

(i) Part-time learners are going significantly to increase in number.

(ii) Increasing numbers of Albertans will take advantage of Vocational Centres as "first chance" institutions.

(iii) The use of micro-computers and other technologies will be incorporated in the classroom as effective learning aides.

(iv) More effective career planning will require learning modules that will facilitate transferability to other programmes and other institutions.

(v) Changing employer demands will likely require two-year diploma programming.

(vi) Training programmes may become tightly packaged, competency based modules of learning.

(vii) Increasing off-campus delivery will result in more programmes becoming portable for offering in other locations.

(viii) Brokerage of programmes from other institutions will allow for specialised offerings on an occasional basis.

(ix) AVCs are likely to encounter a much broader target group because of a changing economy,and the advances in technology.

(x) Increased leisure time may cause people to explore educational pursuits that they may not have previously considered.

Essential to all of the above is the requirement that the institutions be responsive and demonstrate flexibility.

Governance

The past five years has seen the conversion of six institutions from provincial administration to public governance. The decisions to make the change were made by elected officials in keeping with government policy.

In anticipating discussion on the future governance ofthe AVCs and CVCs, the institutions are prepared to be open and positive in reviewing various alternatives.

One key feature to consider will be the capacity to continue to offer effective programmes and services to students with special needs. To do so, the institutions should ensure that they retain the capacity to administer a student training allowance support system. This will help the institutions to maintain their "second chance" role under either form of governance.

Course Details

The Community Resource Worker Programme is designed to promote personal growth and provide students with the specific skills required by an effective helping person. The training involves a comprehensive approach to problem identification and solution. Many of the social problems common to rural northern Alberta are examined.

CAREER POTENTIAL

Graduates may be employed as resource persons in the areas of addiction counselling, social work, court work, probation, or juvenile deliquency.

PROGRAMME OF STUDIES AND HOURS

English/Reading Lab 100	120 hours
Psychology 102	48 hours
Sociology 101	48 hours
Human Relations/Counselling Skills 100	144 hours
Social Services 100	72 hours
Fieldwork Methods 100	96 hours
Applied Community Services 100	48 hours
Elective	72 hours
Field practicum	444 hours

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

English/Reading Lab 100: The study and practice of reading, writing and learning skills to college level Proficiency.

Psychology 102: The general principles governing human behaviours with focus on the practical application of psychological theory. Specific areas covered include motivation and emotions, learning, personality theories and abnormal psychology.

Sociology 101: Causal relationships, social and cultural differences, and community actions processes are examined through a study of socialization, social institutions and related problems.

Human Relations/Counselling Skills 100: The study and practice of basic communications, interpersonal relations, and problem solving with emphasis on interviewing and counselling skills.

Social Services 100: Basic principles of government, social service agencies, the judicial system and problems therein.

Fieldwork Methods 100: The study and practice of the techniques and methods used in social service work.

Field Practicum: Full-time supervised placement in existing social service agencies for twelve weeks. The student may either opt for general exposure to several agency areas or focus on one area of specialization.

Applied Community Services 100: The opportunity to put theory into practice through volunteer work in local social agencies. In addition, students may broaden their knowledge by attending mini-workshops in areas indirectly linked with the social service profession, e.g. basic first aid, basic computer, money management.

Electives: Students pursue study in one of the following areas:

1. Recreation Leadership
2. Native Cultural Arts
3. Arts and Crafts
4. Holistic Action Relaxation Process

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

1. Maturity and aptitude in dealing with people.

2. A genuine desire to be a member of the helping professions.

3. Grade 12 equivalency and extensive community experience, or a combination of the above.

4. Must pass English proficiency tests. Candidates may be required to complete remedial English/study skills courses prior to admission.

5. Interview to be conducted by AVC counsellor and/or member of the CRW instructional staff.

6. A knowledge of a Native language and experience in community organization are definite assets.

Institutional Self Evaluation
Questions

A. PERCEIVED GOALS OF THE INSTITUTION

What is it that you think AVC is supposed to be doing? (Short term, long term?)

B. GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

(a) Which goals have been met?

(b) Have not been met?

C. GOAL CHANGES

What new goals should AVC consider? Which existing goals should we modify?

D. COMMUNITY PERCEPTION

What opinions or views do outsiders have of AVC?

E. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

What opportunities exist for individuals and staff units to improve themselves? Suggestions?

F. THE SELF-STUDY

What value will this self-study be to AVC?

G. COMMENTS

Please note any other questions, comments, or concerns not already touched on.

H. MAJOR TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

What is it that you are supposed to do?

I. TASK AND RESPONSIBILITY VARIANCES

What do you do or not do that is different from what you are supposed to be doing?

J. RESULTS ACHIEVED

In what parts of your work have you been most successful? Note your successes and accomplishments.

K. MAJOR PROBLEMS

In what ways has your work not gone as well as you would like? What factors have negatively affected your results?

L. BEEFS AND BOUQUETS

What are some of the smaller annoying problems that you encounter? What smaller things or happenings do you appreciate or enjoy about your work at AVC?

M. AVC BUDGET

Do you think that the budget of AVC is being spent efficiently?

(a) Where is it being spent well?

(b) Where is it not being well spent?

N. OTHER AVC OPERATIONS

What questions, comments, or concerns do you have about any AVC operations other than your own?

O. NON-AVC OPERATIONS

What comments and concerns do you have about:

(a) Department of Advanced Education and its staff?

(b) Other Agencies you work with (Canada Manpower, AGS, Social Services, others?)

P. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

What changes (i.e. modifications, additions, deletions) do you suggest for AVC and its operations that would improve the work done in your area?

Q. SUPERVISION

How do you feel you are being supervised? For example, do you feel you are getting enough assistance, direction, freedom, etc., or on the other hand too much of these. Please comment on the following:

(a) Immediate Supervision

(b) Institutional Supervisors (i.e. Management Team)

(c) Do you feel you are being utilized to the best of your capacity? If not, how could AVC better make use of your talents and abilities?

R. STAFF COMPETENCE

In terms of being competent, how do you regard the following groups at their job? Please rank each group from 1 to 5; 1 being very competent and 5 being very incompetent. If you cannot rank a certain group, please check Not Applicable.

1. Trades
2. Voc. Prep.
3. Library
4. Paraprofessional
5. CATNAC
6. Management
7. Kitchen
8. Administrative Services
9. Warehouse
10. Clerical
11. Residence
12. Recreation
13. Student Services
14. Daycare
15. Business Education

16. Extension

17. Counselling

S. STAFF CO-OPERATION

Would you say that the staff of AVC are generally co-operative?

(a) Individually

(b) In Work Areas (if not, where not?)

(c) Comments

T. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME MATTERS

What major comments or concerns do you wish to raise on any of the following?

1. Programme Development Process

2. Programme Evaluation

3. Programme Length

4. Intake, Orientation Procedures

5. Testing Policies

6. Intake Frequency

7. Prerequisites

8. Career Counselling

9. Employer Contact

10. Student Evaluation

11. Student Certification

12. Student Follow-up

13. Organisational Structure

14. Staffing

15. Physical Facilities

16. Financing

17. Staff Evaluation

18. Intra-Institution Co-operation, Communication

19. Equipment

20. Goals

21. Morale, Esprit

U. COMMENTS

Please note any other questions, comments, or concerns not already touched on.